

ANTIBODY-AVIDIN FUSION PROTEINS AS CYTOTOXIC DRUGS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0069] Methods and compositions for inducing apoptosis and/or inhibiting proliferation of cells. The method includes exposing the cells to a cytotoxic agent which is made up of a targeting moiety and an avidin moiety wherein the targeting moiety is capable of binding to one or more receptors located on the cells. The invention is based on the discovery that attaching an avidin moiety to non-toxic targeting moieties produces a cytotoxic agent which can be used to treat tumor cells both *in vivo* and *in vitro*. The present cytotoxic agent eliminates the use of biotinylated toxic drugs which previously have been conjugated to antibody-avidin targeting vehicles.